[For full bibliographical references see category 116, 6: Spate AW1 India, entire source and bibliographical notes at the end of each chapter.]

[For a regional division of the Indian sub-continent see Chapter XIII, 6: Spate AW1 India.]

128, 113 Andamans AZ2

[For information pertaining to literary devices and conventions, abbreviations and explanations of numerations used by the author, see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. xxi-xxiii, and xxv.]

133, 113 Andamans AZ2

[For a description and discussion of the structure and relief of the entire Indian sub-continent, see 6: Spate, AWl India, category 116, pp. 3-36.]

[For a description of climate regions of the Indian sub-continent and its general effects on agriculture and health, see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. 40-62.]

133, 113 Andamans AZ2

[For general information on the distribution of various types of flora and its relation to climate and soil, see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. 63-92.]

[For general information on the distribution of soil types in India see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. 80-92.]

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Andamans AZ2

[For a general discussion of animal husbandry in India, see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. 228-231.]

[For definitions and explanations of native terms see Index, category 116, 6: Spate AW1 India, pp. 789-821.]

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1780. Dunn.
1809, and onwards. Horsburgh.
1874, onwards. Taylor.
1892, onwards. Bay of Bengal Pilot.

4: Guha E-5 (1948-1949)1953 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

namely, that they are a very dark pigmy tribe, with short round head and infantile features. The hair of the head is wholly of the distinctly "peppercorn" pattern, *i.e.*, it grows in small tufts with intervening vacant spaces between (*see* Plate VII). The women were noticed to possess steotopygia in a markedly developed form (*see* Plate II, Fig. 2).

Freiherr von Eickstedt who visited the Islands in December 1926, claimed that he was the first scientist to observe these two traits among the Andamanese. His contentions, however, cannot stand scrutiny, for in a paper read before the Royal Society of Edinburgh on February 2, 1880, entitled "Remarks on the Aborigines of the Andaman Islands" and published in the Proceedings of that Society, Surgeon E. S. Brander, who was stationed at Port Blair as Second Medical Officer, speaking about the general features of the Andamanese women, remarked that they "undergo exceptional enlargement of the gluteal region, the appearance of which is enhanced by their custom of attaching branches of twigs to their waist bands, so as to hang over this region. This large development of abdomen, hip and buttocks, added to a very waddling style of gait, gives these women in progression a most grotesque appearance". Eight years after, in a paper published in the Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society and Monthly Record of Geography, Maurice Portman, who was the Officer-in-Charge of the Andamanese, in describing his visit to the Little Andaman, wrote about "the Hottentot Venus order of beauty" of the Onge women. The Hottentot Venus, as is well-known, is noted for her steotopygic development. These two papers appeared over 40 years before von Eickstedt's publication.

A detailed comparative review of the somatic traits of the Onges based on the measurements taken by members of this Department will be published in the next issue of the Bulletin. Mr S. S. Sarkar's analysis of the blood group data is, however, published in this issue.

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7:Sarkar D-4, 5 (1948) 1960 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onge

Onge Population and Settlements. — **Introduction.** — Since the opening of the Andaman sub-station of the Department of Anthropology, Government of India, the Little Andaman Island has been visited several times by anthropological experts but the sum-total of knowledge has been rather meagre. We have not yet been able to know accurately the total Onge population. The recent paper by CIPRIANI [1] (1956), on the other hand, gives a hitherto unknown picture of the biology of the Onge population. The latter appears to show, as will be obvious from the data presented below, a high masculinity while CIPRIANI's method of population census shows high feminine population.

Earlier Data. — In a discussion of this nature we can leave aside the Onge population *estimated* at the decennial Censuses and take into account those actually seen and counted. In 1911 the number of Onges actually seen comprised :

adult male	118,	adult female	78
child male	62,	child female	28
	180		106

thus giving a total of 286 individuals. This shows a 10.20 % excess of males in the case of adults and an excess of 18.89 % males in the case of children.

During the Census of 1921, a total number of 99 individuals was counted at the following places :

	Rutland Island	Tochiewe	Toibalawe	Terendda [2]	Total
Adult male	27	6	6	5	44
Adult female	18	–	5	3	26
Child male	8	1	3	5	17
Child female	8	–	2	2	12
	61	7	16	15	99

Eighty Onges were counted in 1911 on Rutland Island, which number decreased by about 24 % to 61 in 1921. No Onges were reported from the same island during the Census of 1931 and at present there appears to be none, either. The details of the 80 Onges reported in 1911 are unknown.

The Rutland population of 1921, however, shows an excess of 10 % adult males while the child population shows the two sexes in equal numbers. The total population, actually seen in 1921, shows an excess of 12.86 % adult males while it is 8.62 % in the case of children. Compared with the 1911 population it appears that the adult male excess has increased by 2.66 % in 1921 while the child population shows a favourable decrease by 10.37 %.

Recent Data. — On February 25, 1948 during the first trip of the Department of Anthropology [3], 38 individuals were counted before the communal hut of Tambebui, which comprised 17 adult males, 15 adult females and 6 children, 4 males and 2 females. The higher number of males among both the adults and children is apparent in this small sample. The above 38 individuals comprised 4 persons, 2 males and 2 females, from the communal hut of Laito, which had been visited by the above party the day before. The total population of the communal hut of Tambebui is probably 34, which is in striking contrast to the population of 4 souls for the communal hut of Laito.

GUHA also mentions the January, 1949 trip by the Department of Anthropology into Hut Bay, towards the south of the island, where 11 individuals, comprising 2 adult males, 6 adult females and 3 children (sex not mentioned) were seen in the local communal hut. The latter contained 9 sleeping places only.

The 1952 and 1953 parties of the Department of Anthropology were led by LIDIO CIPRIANI. His account is difficult to follow. There are very few relevant data regarding

[1] LIDIO CIPRIANI, Report on a Survey of the Little Andaman during 1951-52. Bull. Dept. Anth. 2. 1956, pp. 61-82.
[2] So spelt in the 1921 Census.
[3] B. S. GUHA, Report of a Survey of the Inhabitants of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands during 1948-49, I. Calcutta 1952, pp. 1-7.

7:Sarkar D-4, 5 (1948) 1960 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onge

and seven with those of the 1911 Census. The total number of twenty existing huts, however, agree in both CIPRIANI's map and the 1911 Census map; only names differ. It would have added greatly to our knowledge had CIPRIANI based his investigations on the 1911 Census map and commented on each of the place names given therein. He also mentions two huts in ruins besides eleven "no more in existence". There is no mention of any newly built hut. All this proves the decadent condition of the Onges. The coastal huts are probably more numerous than those within the jungles and their total number appears to be constant both in 1911 and in 1953.

The Onges have, in recent years, been visited so many times by anthropologists that a well-directed effort could have brought the whole population into a few genealogies — an elementary task in anthropology.

Postscript. — CIPRIANI has now (1959) published[1] the Census figures of the different communal huts. Instead of clarifying the earlier anomalies stated above, his recent population figures have raised further complications, as will be discussed below.

CIPRIANI now (1959) mentions in a footnote on p. 89 of his paper that 125 individuals, comprising 48 adult males, 44 adult females, 22 boys and 11 girls, *have beds in different communal huts*. He gives a total population figure of 394 (130 adult males, 129 adult females, 65 boys and 70 girls) obtained by actual Census from 21 communal huts. To this total figure of 394 he adds another total of 175 individuals (adult males and females 74 each, and 27 children, the latter shown as "males" on p. 90 but as "siblings" on p. 76) estimated for another 7 communal huts. Thus according to a Census of 21 huts and an estimate of 7 others, CIPRIANI now finds a total Onge population of 596, in comparison to his earlier variable figures stated above. There is no attempt to explain the discrepancies in the population figures. It is also unknown why the population of the 7 huts could not be censused, although all of them were visited between March 22 and April 4, 1953.

It is now apparent that his method of Census of the Onges is untenable since about 31.7 % (125 out of 394) of the population have beds in different communal huts. This is in harmony with the roving nature of the Onges, but it shows that only about one third of the population is migratory and about two thirds sedentary. This is probably not true for the Onges. At least, the fixed nature of beds in the communal huts loses its significance and is probably an uncertain criterion for an Onge Census.

As to a recalculation of the Census figures for each of the 21 huts, it is seen that the total population appears to be 382 (129 adult males, 126 adult females, 64 boys and 63 girls) instead of 394 given by CIPRIANI. This definitely shows high masculinity not only among adults but also among the children. With an adult population of 129 males and 126 females the sex ratio works up to 50.6 % males and 49.4 % females, the excess of 1.2 % being statistically significant.

In the present publication CIPRIANI has published personal names of 133 adult males and 140 female adults, but the Onge habit of frequently changing names, mentioned by him on p. 70, has not been substantiated. Since the same issue of the journal contains an anthropometric study of the Onges, in which names of the individuals measured were noted, it would have been worth while testing how far the Onges practise the above custom. As will be obvious from the foregoing as well as from this P. S., CIPRIANI has not started with the known to unravel the unknown.

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[1] L. CIPRIANI, A Survey of Little Andaman during 1954. Bull. Dept. of Anthr. 3. 1959, pp. 66-94.

fieldwork among the Ongi is the language problem. Dr. DATTA-MAJUMDER writes: 114 124

"It should be noted that very little information about the social organization of the Onge has been gathered so far on account of the barrier of language. Not a single interpreter knowing Onge language is available. We came across only two Onge men who knew just a few words of Hindi as a result of their occasional visits to Port Blair".

This was confirmed by Professor CIPRIANI who, in his letter, also mentions the two Ongi who know a little Hindi and adds: "No real Ongi interpreter is, as yet, available". RADCLIFFE-BROWN's experience had been similar. He found only two Ongi men who knew about 20 words of Hindustani.

PORTMAN seems to have been more fortunate in 1886—87. He mentions having had Ongi interpreters. These may have been members of a group of eleven persons who had been captured in the Cinque Islands, between Great and Little Andaman, in 1885 and who had been brought to Port Blair. It would be of great help for anthropological research if a few Ongi could be induced to stay some time in Port Blair and to learn either Hindi or English. In any case, however, an anthropologist wishing to do serious work on Little Andaman will have to remain long enough on the island to acquire sufficient knowledge of the language. He could prepare himself in advance for this task through a thorough study of the available literature on the Great Andaman languages (MAN, PORTMAN, TEMPLE, BASU). Although the languages are different, they are related, and their structure is probably more or less similar. For the Ongi language itself, we have only RADCLIFFE-BROWN's "Notes on the Languages of the Andaman Islands", the list of Ongi words in PORTMAN's "Manual of the Andamanese Languages" (1887) — which RADCLIFFE-BROWN found "of no service whatever" — and a vocabulary of the Ongi language, compiled by M. C. C. BONIG in 1903 and published in Port Blair. 114 122 197

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AZ2 Andamans AZ2

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Jarawa

101 [197] [174] [148] Although the Jarawa inhabit the jungles of South and Middle Andaman, they do not belong to the Great Andaman group of tribes, but are culturally and linguistically related to the Ongi. It is assumed that they originally came from Little Andaman. The Jarawa owe their survival to their having remained isolated as a result of their implacable hostility toward the British (now Indian) colonial settlement. Information on their raids and the punitive expeditions against them will be found in the respective volumes of the Census of India. [161] In 1931 their number was estimated at either 70 (BONINGTON) or 120 (HUTTON). Their culture conforms to the general Andamanese pattern, but differs in various respects from that of their former neighbours, the extinct Great Andaman tribes. Except for their communal huts and such of their material possessions as were found during punitive expeditions, practically nothing is known about it. Our knowledge of their language is restricted to lists of words col-

Our knowledge of their language is restricted to lists of words collected from captive Jarawas by COLEBROOK in 1789—90 and by PORTMAN in the 19th century. 114 648

Research on the Jarawa would by highly desirable, but will be impossible as long as they remain hostile.

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North Sentinel Island

North Sentinel is an island of about 30 square miles west of the southern tip of Great Andaman. It has been briefly visited by Government officers on various occasions, but it seems that no contacts were ever made with the natives, except on December 27th, 1886, when the Ongi, who accompanied PORTMAN on his trip, "caught" some of them (Census of India, 1901, p. 92). From PORTMAN's report it does not become clear whether or not he saw these temporary captives himself. Our knowledge of the culture is restricted to a few observations on their material possessions. The communal huts differ from those of the rest of the Andamanese. The canoes differ from those of both Great and Little Andaman, but are more like those of the latter. The bows resemble those of the Jarawa and Ongi. On the basis of this it is assumed that the natives are related to the Jarawa and Ongi, but PORTMAN's Ongi companions are said to have found that the persons whom they had caught talked "an entirely different language". 101 131 648 197

In 1901 the number of the natives was estimated as 117. This estimate was based on the area of the island and the assumption that the density of the population was approximately the same as that of great Andaman in precolonial times. The figure was not changed in either 1911 or 1921. In 1931 the number was estimated as 50 "on conclusions arrived at from several visits during the last decade and after counting the number of huts found and the sleeping places", but it is said that this does not necessarily mean a decrease in population. "It is believed that the population is stationary, for 161

161 the Sentinel islanders have been kept free from direct contact with civilization".

114 181 [48] In the Census Report of 1931 it is said that the natives "like the Jarawas are entirely hostile", but no reason is given for this statement. Previous visitors found them exceedingly shy, but not hostile. When seeing foreigners, they simply fled into the jungle. M. C. C. BONIG who visited North Sentinel Island on the 10th of March, 1911, in the course of that year's Census operations, wrote:

"The people appear very timid and it seems not unlikely that if they are approached frequently with presents, they will become friendly of their own accord".

114 No information on North Sentinel Island more recent than the 1931 Census Report has come to our knowledge. If the situation has not changed since then, the culture of its natives should be completely intact and untouched by outer influences — a unique case among the primitive tribes of southern Asia. Here, therefore, is a truly ideal opportunity for anthropological research.

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Census of India, 1901, Vol. III, *The Andaman and Nicobar Islands*, by Sir RICHARD C. TEMPLE, pp. 4, 92 (PORTMAN's visit).

Census of India, 1911, Vol. II, *The Andaman and Nicobar Islands*, by R. F. LOWIS, pp. 28—29 (BONIG's Report).

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A. R. RADCLIFFE-BROWN, *The Andaman Islanders*, 2nd ed., Cambridge, 1933, pp. 412—413, 422—423, 491—492.

9:Sarkar D-5 (1948) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Jarawa

language could have been learnt by now since they are friendly. There has not been any attempt to communicate with the Jarawa through the medium of the Onge language, which could be tried with the help of loudspeakers installed at suitable places in reply to the buttress beatings of the Jarawa. Prior to this an aerial survey of the Jarawa villages or camps would be necessary. Some food, clothing or other such articles might be air-dropped during this aerial survey. Along with the articles to be air-dropped some pictures showing symbols of friendship, such as the Andamanese and the Onge way of sitting upon one another's laps, might be included. Some pictures showing the Indian manner of greeting one another, for instance that of saluting each other with folded hands, might also be considered.

The local government appears to be very much in favour of capturing the Jarawa alive and then letting them off with presents after kind treatment. Since the capture of the Jarawa from South Andaman is not an easy problem – as may be seen from the Census Reports of the last sixty years – we might try this method of approach with the Jarawa of North Sentinel Island, where such captures appear to be comparatively easier.

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10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

(1) *The Period of Seclusion and Piratical Disturbances*

[175] In this period of seclusion, people had some knowledge of these islands from the travellers, traders and sea-pirates owing to the central position of the islands on the trade routes of India, Burma and the Far East. The islands were inhabited exclusively by the aborigines. Mention of these islands dates back to the 2nd Century A. D. in the writings of Claude Ptolemy. The map referred to, in his writings, indicates the Islands of Buzacata to be in the place of the Andaman Islands and it is said that this island produces quantities of shells and the inhabitants go naked and are called Agmatae. It is believed that the Island of Buzacata means to refer to the Andaman Islands and such a peculiar name (Buzacata) has been achieved through the originality of the cartographer.

Later mentions of these islands are found in the collection of early Arab notes of the 9th Century on India and China which were translated by Eus. Renaudat and the people of the Andamans have been called Angamanians. Further mention of the islands is made by two Mohammedan travellers (Pemberton's General Collection of voyages and travels), Chinese Buddhist Monk I'Tsing (672 A.D.), Marco Polo (1286 A.D.), Friar Odoric (1322 A.D.), Nicolo Conti (1430) etc. From most of their writings it was evident that the islands were inhabited by very ugly brutes who would eat up any man whom they could lay hands on. Nevertheless, this was a land of riches and was named the "Island of Gold." An idea of the knowledge of these islands in the early days can be had from the notes of Marco Polo, a portion of which is quoted below.

"Angamanian is a very long island. The people are without a king and are idolaters and no better than wild beasts. All the men of this island of Angamanian have heads like dogs, and teeth and eye likewise; in fact, in the face they are just like big mastiff dogs. They have a quantity of species; but they are a most cruel generation, and eat everybody that they can catch, if not of their own race. They live on flesh and rice and milk and have fruits different from any of ours."

[648] These types of early notes by different travellers are largely written from second hand knowledge and tales current in the neighbouring countries of the Andamans viz. Malaya, Siam, etc. Mr. Portman[1] opines

[113]

1 Portman, M. V.—A history of our relations with the Andamanese.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

[P. 11]

CHAPTER III

PHYSICAL SET-UP

The Andaman & Nicobar Islands form a part of the continuous ridge which runs form the Cape Negrais of Burma through the Preparis and Coco Islands to the Andamans and continues further to the Nicobars and Sumatra. The whole ridge has a geological affinity with the Arakan Yoma of Burma and Sumatra and Java. The ridge is primarily of Eocene formation and forms a part of the great Alpine-Himalayan system. Prof. Gregory holds the view that "the main line continues eastward through the Himalaya until the resistance of the Chinese plateau has traced it southward and part of it now lies beneath the Bay of Bengal, it reappears in Sumatra and continues through Java and across the Malaya Archipelago."[1] But some modifications of Gregory's view have been achieved and presently it is believed that this ridge is a loop of the main Himalayan axis comparable to the Persian loop in western Asia and Apennine loop in Europe.[2] The ridge is not continuous but is interrupted in many places, of which the 3 main channels are worth considering. The depth of the channels increases from north to south. 133

(1) Preparis channel in between north and south Preparis islands has a depth of over 500 fathoms.

(2) The Degree Channel, between the Andamans and the Nicobars, is approximately 400 fathoms deep.

(3) Great Channel lying between Great Nicobar Island and Sumatra is about 750 to 800 fathoms deep.

The peaks of the mountains now form the islands and in some places the coastline slopes very steeply to the ocean.

GEOLOGY OF THE ANDAMANS

The present knowledge of the geology of the islands is largely the outcome of the investigations done by R. D. Oldham (1885), Kurz (1868), Gee, and G. H. Tipper. Even at present a thorough geological knowledge of the islands has not been achieved and this has been due to a number [114]

1. Gregory, J. W.—The Structure of Asia, London, Methuen. [113]
2. Swell, R. B. (1925)—Geography of the Andaman Basin, Geographic and Oceanographic Researches in Indian waters, Mem. Asiatic. Soc Bengal IX, No. 1.

[text continues on p. 13]

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

of reasons. Firstly, a thorough survey of the islands is very difficult because of the dense forests and hostile aborigines. Secondly, the Government also cared little to take pains for initiating such a work. Regarding the inconveniences of geologising Tipper writes "the thickness of the jungles may be judged from the fact that our rate of progress varied from half a mile to a mile an hour. The dense jungle with a lack of exposures made geologising very difficult."[1]

Rink first postulated that the Andaman-Nicobar ridge was elevated to its present height from ocean bottom. He describes the chain of islands as consisting "partly of those stratified deposits which occupied the level bottom of the sea before their appearance. and partly of plutonic rocks which pierced through the former and came to the surface through upheaval.

To the two above-mentioned formations has to be added a third. which is the result of the chemical and mechanical destruction of the plutonic masses; it is local and consists of clays and pebbles derived from the underlying strata."

On the whole, the mountain ranges of the Andamans are of sandstones of Eocene Age with intensive rocks of serpentine in places. Large parts of the North Andaman have been grouped under the Archipelago Series by Oldham. Tipper considers the conglomerates of North and Middle Andamans as a facies of the Eocene deposit. Between the mountain ranges which run north to south, some undulating ground is found which often consists of impermeable blue clay beds, indurated shales and conglomerates containing pebbles of quartz and jasper. Coral reefs and the raised beaches form the recent and sub-recent formation of the Andamans. The formation of the Andaman-Nicobar ridge has been assigned to late Cretaceous age.

Oldham has distinguished two sedimentary formations in the Andamans besides serpentine series. He named them as

(1) Port Blair Series, &
(2) Archipelago Series[2]

The Port Blair series is so named because it is dominant in and around Port Blair, i.e., in the South Andaman. The rock types are gray sandstones with interbedded slaty shales, frequently consisting nests

1. Tipper, G. H.—The geology of the Andaman Islands with reference to the Nicobars. Mem. Geol. Sur. Ind., Vol 35, Part 4.

2. Oldham, R. D.—Notes on the Geology of the Andaman Islands, Rec. Geol. Sur. of Ind., Vol. 18, Part 3, 1885.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

Hence the formation of the coral reefs and raised beaches can be accounted for only if we believe in the recent upheaval of the Andaman-Nicobar ridge. Let us see the evidences that are in favour of this upheaval and those against it. Swell and Tipper believe that the Andaman-Nicobar ridge has experienced an apparent elevation of land which is only possible through the eustatic change of water-level. They have put forward a number of arguments that are as follows:

(1) The formation of coral reefs is possible only if there be an apparent or true elevation of the land.

(2) Throughout the tropical belt there are evidences of an apparent elevation of land in comparatively recent times.

(3) At the South West corner of Rutland Island in the Andaman Group, there is a raised pebble beach, situated 5'-6" above the top-level.

(4) At the southwest end of the westermost of the Twin Islands, off the west side of the Rutland Island, is a raised beach of shingle-conglomerates, about 6' ft. above high water-mark. This apparent upheaval of the land i.e. fall of the sea-level is believed to have been caused by the climatic fluctuations in the Quaternary period causing glacial and interglacial periods which resulted in a fall and rise of the water-level respectively.

But Kurz (1868) does not believe in the recent upheaval of the Andamans, but he holds the opposite view. The advocacy of Kurz in favour of the sinking of the Andamans is also due to a number of reasons.

Kurz had his conclusion from the botanical aspect of the coastal region. Kurz says, "some of the stumps of the trees (along the shore) proved to belong to such species as never grew in the mangrove swamps, and in any locality such as that in which they are now standing. They appeared to me to belong to *Pongamia, Erythrina, Thesperia* and even to *Manusops Indica,* accompanied by strongly buttressed trunks. Also trunks of *Bruguiera-gymnarhiza* are frequent and of a larger size than those which grow close to the shores but apparently agreeing with those which are everywhere found further up the creeks. All these (except the last mentioned) are trees which never occur in the mangrove swamps, but in the sandy soil just behind them or else bordering the sea where the shores are very steep and not adapted to the formation of mangrove swamps."[1] This evidently leads one to believe that the

1. Kurz. S—On the vegetation of the Andaman Islands, Calcutta.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

[133] [137] Andamans are sinking so that the trees which are found in the sandy soils behind the mangrove swampo are seen to be amidst them.

The sinking state of the Andamans has been further shown by quoting the reports of the Andaman Committee (1858)[2]. It is stated that the sea had encroached upon some 40′ or 50′ feet since the first settlement at Chatham Island in Port Cornwallis so that the store house that stood up there has been destroyed by the sea since the abandonment of the place since 1796. Again the Hamfray's strait changed a good deal in a very short margin of time. The easiness with which Helfer[3] in 1858 sailed through the strait became unnavigable later on except for small boats, as pointed out by the Andaman Committee. These facts not only prove the sinking state of the islands but also the rapidity with which the sinking is taking place. But the view has been strongly disputed by Tipper and Swell. Swell believes that whatever evidence that is found in favour of sinking is completely due to local change of level and Tipper argues that the coastal regions have slipped downwards to the sea giving rise to the evidences of sinking. He says that the structure of the Andamans may allow such slips into the sea.

Thus the enigma of the problem remains unsolved. Even in recent years the Ross Island off the Port Blair coast has been found to sink down into the sea. We have to scrutinize that this sinking which is evidenced in many parts of the Andamans is whether due to a new phase of sinking after the cessation of the upheaval of the islands which created the coral reefs, raised beaches etc. or due to the slip of the coastal region into the sea.

The direct connection of the Andaman and Nicobar islands with the mainland is still a controversial matter. But it is held by Mr. Kurz that the Andamans were connected with the mainlands which he concluded largely from his observations of the botanical aspect of the islands. In describing the flora of the Andamans he remarks "one may presume that a great number of species which originally grew in countries now submerged between these islands, Burmah and Hindoostan, have been repelled by the advancing sea and vegetation has thus become comparatively richer in generic types as the area grew smaller." Swell argues if at all any land connection of the islands with the mainland would have occurred, it would have surely been broken before the evolution of

[113] 2. Bonington, M.C.C.—The Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Census of India, 1931.

3. Helfer, a Russian geologist, while prospecting the islands in search of gold was killed by the aborigines.

10:Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

313 492 power in the forests. The net revenue of the forests from 1869 amounted to Rs. 45,65,764 inclusive of a capital asset of Rs. 21,39,983.

313 The present day forest exploitation has to some extent been revitalised with the introduction of regenerating processes and use of disel engines for the trams carrying logs from the spot of exploitation to the jetty wherefrom it is carried down to Port Blair for sawing and finally exported to the mainland and London. The working of the forest in the Andamans and its preparation for marketing undergo a number of stages. After a proper survey, a spot of exploitation is selected where a forest camp is opened near the jetty with a sufficient strength of imported labourers from India. The forest camps are erected with local timber and the exploitation proceeds from the spot in the immediate neighbourhood of the jetty (exclusive of the mangrove forests) to the interior regions. Along with the expansion of the exploitation area, tram lines are laid down from the jetty onwards. The felling is done by chiselling the trunk of the trees and then it is pulled by a few elephants for breaking it down. This completes the felling of the tree and after properly cutting all the branches, the logs are carried by an elephant with the help of his trunk and are unloaded from the tram. Afterwards, it is taken to the jetty where the logs are again unloaded and rafted in a tank-landing craft to make them ready for transportation to Chatham Island where it is shown into standard size (not always) and is exported to the markets. The transportation of the logs from the spot of exploitation to Port Blair is always done on water ways. The success in the transportation of the logs have been facilitated by the innumerable harbours and creeks making easy the passage of the boat into the interior parts of the islands and it is found that the average drag seldom exceeds a mile and at the same time exploitation requires some experience of local conditions and foresight, as the coastal areas are exposed to the open seas and advantage has to be taken of the different seasons of the year to work in different tracts.

313 505

313 433 The yield of merchantable timber is only 15 tons per acre. An assessment of the future potentialities of merchantable timber with the introduction of the present method of regeneration has been given by Sri Chengapa[1]. The sustained or perpetual yield of the forests is about 135,000 tons per year and according to him, with the introduction of the present method of regeneration, the yield per acre is expected to be as much as 75 tons per acre, a five fold increase of the present yield. The

[113] 1 Chengapa, B. S. — The Andaman forests and their development; Census of India, 1951, Volume XVII, Andaman & Nicobar Islands by A. K. Ghosh.

10:Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

313 (4) The amount of exploitation of timber in the Andamans reflects the nature of demand and its amount. The demand being highly elastic so long, the exploitation, in consequence, has suffered. The sale system of timber is far from satisfactory as the prices of the timbers are informed by the farms who buy them and on this basis the prices of the timbers are fixed and Sri Shivdasani writes[1] that "the purchasers themselves are the suppliers of information on which the department fixes the price. The effect of refusal to sell to anyone who wants the produce is to eliminate one of the main price determining factors i.e., extent of demand. The tendency of selected purchasers who become middlemen and pass on the timber to consumers after keeping a profit for themselves is to be more interested in buying those varieties of timber produced that have the best market. At the hands of the selected purchasers the marketing of Andaman timber cannot receive the attention required to ensure that as many categories as possible are sold. The interests and profit of the selected purchasers came first. Not only are they in a position to obtain disproportionate profit but the fixing of the price of such an important commodity being left to negotiations between one officer and interested purchasers is fraught with other dangers also."

(5) The problem of labour supply is also not satisfactory. Local labourers are not available because of their reluctance to do all these jobs. Labourers are to be brought from the mainland and they are either Ranchi or South Indian labourers.

The immediate steps that should be taken for the proper working of the forest are the fundamental change in the sale-system, addition of transports facilities from the Andamans to the mainland, formation of a permanent source of local labourers and proper surveys before the forests are worked. Regeneration of the forests have been introduced in recent times. The over importance given by the Forest Department to a few farms in the sale of Andaman timbers has led the department to be a tool in the hands of the farms. The sale of these timbers should be made to any farm found suitable by the Forest Department after proper consideration and the fixation of the price should also be determined by the department.

Unless the transportation facilities of timbers from the islands to the mainland are increased, the amount of forest working can hardly

[113]

1 Shivdasani, H. R.—Report on the possibilities of Colonization and development of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, 1949.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

[P. 96]

CHAPTER VII

MINERAL RESOURCES

135 The mineral resources in the Andamans were believed to be bountiful. There had been mentions in the earlier notes of many travellers and historians (e.g. Nicolo Conti) about the richness of the islands in gold and they have gone so far as to call these islands as the "Island of Gold". But unfortunately no gold has yet been found in the Andamans nor is there any reason to suppose that it will be found. In this [648] connection it may be recalled that Dr. Helfer, a Russian Geologist was killed by the aborigines while he was making geological prospecting in search of gold. M. V. Portman discovered specimens of various minerals in the neighbourhood of Port Blair and they are chromium, copper, iron and sulphur. As such the land seemed to be sufficiently promising and Mr. Mallet[1] proceeded to Port Blair for further investigations. But unfortunately no important deposit of any mineral has been found to occur except some nests of lignite and bands of pure limestone in scattered places and in the serpentine rocks specially in the northeast part of Rutland occur small crystals of bronzite.

A few miles south of Port Blair near about Rangachang, highly altered and eruptive rocks are found being traversed by veins, the main constituent of which is hematite, but which consist of a considerable portion of pyrite (iron pyrites) and chalcopyrite (copper pyrite) in much smaller quantity.

Of the above-mentioned minerals, none are found to be economically exploitable. It has been argued that the Andamans cannot be rich in minerals because the Arakan Yoma of Burma also shows a barrenness in minerals and the only ores which need be noticed for practical purposes are those of tin, iron, lead, copper, antimony, none of which save iron, are known west of Sittang. But the apparent barrenness of the Arakan hills, however, can not be taken as conclusively proving that the Andamans are equally unproductive. It is believed that the Japanese carried out a full mineral survey of the islands and are reported to have found deposits including coal, iron and precious stones.

[113]

1. Mallet, F. L. On some of the mineral resources of the Andaman Islands in the neighbourhood of Port Blair, Rec. G.S.I. Vol. XVII, 1884.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Negritos

original type can still be found in the Little Andaman. The similarity of the arrows are also striking and this has been rightly observed by Dr. Cipriani,[1] 'Similarity also with the arrows. This consists of a barbed detachable head connected to the shaft by a string. The harpoon arrow like its near relative and probable forefather, the harpoon spears, offers an interesting question in ethnography. Although the Andamans are widely separated from Malaya and Malaya from the Philippines, the three groups of negritoes have harpoon arrows, while such weapons do not seem to be present in other regions of Asia.' The huts of the Andamanese are also the outcome of further improvements over the original negrito shelter found among the other negrito groups.

In the general habits and the modes of living, a good deal of similarity if not identity is maintained with the other negritoes. But changes and modifications have crept up among the different groups in response to the different environments. Some of the original habits have been totally forgotten and some equipments have been further improved upon or in some cases, totally forgotten. The Jarawas, who are believed to have arrived in the Great Andamans from the South had the knowledge of construction and use of the canoes which served as the means of their movement from the south to the north, have totally forgotten both the construction and use of it.

Though the changes brought about among the Andamanese in response to the environment and time is in no way inconsiderable to give them an impress of individuality, little room for doubt is left that they belong to the big family of the negritoes whose remnants are only found to-day scattered over the different parts of southeast Asia.

Origin of the Andamanese

The presence of such a small group of negritoes in the deep solitude of physical separation from the other countries obviously arouses the question as to how and wherefrom they came. The attributes of the Andamanese, prove very well their affinity with the negrito groups. Much to the curiosity of the observers, the tribal people of the Nicobar Islands do not show any affinity with the Andamanese culturally or materially and such contrasts are important aspects of anthropological study. However, the distribution of the negrito group in these isolated islands have been explained by some as the passage of the people from the Lower reaches of Burma and it is accepted with greater unanimity be-

1 Cipriani, L—On the origin of the Andamanese, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Census of India, 1961.

[113]

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Negritos

is not in accordance with the opinion that the Andamanese are descendants of shipwrecked Portuguese Negro slaves.' Though this process seems to be very crude for the determination of the exact date of the arrival of the Andamanese, a rough guess can very well be made. Cipriani has also advocated the measurement of the residual radioactivity of charcoal at different levels for the determination of the antiquity of the Andamanese. It is quite obvious that further research in these lines in the future can only give us a more precise idea about the date of the arrival of the aborigines.

The region wherefrom the aborigines arrived and the route of their migration are also matters of considerable controversy. It is believed that the Andaman and Nicobar islands were connected by land with the Arakan folds of Burma in the late Tertiary period, but this is also not very certain. According to Brown, the authority on the anthropology of the Andamans, the negritoes migrated from the Arakan region of Burma if there had been any land connection and if not, they migrated, not by land, but by sea from the Burmese coast (Pegu or Arakan). Brown says, 'The N. E. Monsoon could drift them thence on to the Andamans. It is conceivable that they might have travelled from Sumatra by the way of the Nicobars but the N. E. Monsoon would have appeased their progress in this direction while the S. W. Monsoon would have driven them to the coast of the Andamans. It is hardly possible to imagine them coming from the Malaya Peninsula across the wide stretch of the Andaman Sea. The balance of possibility is in favour of the view that the Andamans were peopled either by land or by sea, from the region of the Lower Burma.'[1] It is probable that the negritoes moved from Burma either at a time when a direct land connection was achieved or when shallow waters in the sea facilitated movement by the rafts of the aborigines, but the former has been considered to be thoroughly untenable because of the absence of any mammalia in the Andamans and this proves that if at all there had been any land connection of Burma and Andamans, it must have been before the evolution of the mammalia. The deep sea researches of Molengraaf (1921) have been utilised by Kaudern (1939)[2] to interpret the probable routes of migration of the negritoes into the Andaman Islands. In the Quaternary period, there had been alternating glacial and interglacial periods because of the

1 Brown, A. R—The Andaman Islands.

2 Kaudern, W—Notes on the geographical distribution of the pygmies and their possible affinities; Etno. Stud. 8, 1939.

10:Sen K-3,4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Negritos

174 change of the climate. In the glacial period, there had been a fall in
133 the level of the sea because of the fact that a great volume of water of the sea had transformed into ice. Hence in one such glacial period, as believed by Kaudern, there was a fall of 300 metres in the sea-level which established a direct contact with Burma facilitating the movement of the negritoes into the islands. But the absence of the Negrito group in the Nicobar Islands, only about 100 miles off the Andamans, invokes inquiry. This conspicuous absence of the negritoes in the Nicobars has been explained by Kaudern in this way:

'If the pygmies, when they migrated from the continent towards the south, were able to reach the former (the Andamans) but not the latter islands (the Nicobars), it meant that there has been at some time a fall of sea level of nearly 300 metres, but not as much as 800 metres in these tracts.'[1] As the Ten Degree channel exists between the Andamans and the Nicobars, the movement of the Negritoes further south was stopped.

174 There has been an attempt of linking up some of the tales of Hindu Mythology, Ramayana with the land and people of the Andamans. Detection of such a link has been speculated in search of the origin of the aboriginal population. Though there is no room for doubt of the affinity of the aborigines of the Andamans with the negritoes, as established from the studies of the physical and cultural anthropology, Shri S. K. Gupta, though not an anthropologist, has been a strong advocate of the opinion that the aborigines of the Andamans are the 'kiratas' of Ramayana. He writes, 'According to modern anthropology they are of the negrito stock. But according to Ramayana they are kiratas. These kiratas have been described in our literature as shiny black, with a copper coloured head of hair (Tamramurdhaja), bulging eyes, strong teeth. The description recorded several thousands years ago, holds good to-day. All these tribes have copper coloured curly short hair growing as it were in separate insulated tufts.'[2] Further knowledge about them is that they live on meat and fish.

The affinity of the Andamanese has been further confirmed by citing some native appellations of the Andamanese which show a striking phonetical similarity to those of the kiratas e.g., *Aka-kora* (*da*), *Aka-kede* (*da*), *Aka-kol* (*da*) etc and also the phonetical similarity of the Onge word *Boan* with Santal word *Bonga* both signifying God.

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[113] 1 Kaudern, W—Notes on the geographical distribution of the pygmies etc, Etno. Stud. 9, 1939.

2 Gupta, S. K—Andaman & Nicobar Islands, 1951.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Negritos

105 177 439 of all these things, locally not available, was felt by the aborigines only due to their slight contact with the later settlers.

However, a broad two-fold division of the aboriginal population can be made.

101 174

1. Aborigines of the Great Andaman Group — All the aborigines of the Great Andamans with the exception of the Jarawas, the most hostile aborigines living in the southwestern part of the Andamans.

2. Aborigines of the Little Andaman Group — the Onges of the Little Andaman, the Jarawas of the South Andaman & the Sentinelese of the North Sentinel island.

As to how these two groups came into being and their areas of distribution, various theories have been put forward. Long after the attainment of the individual traits of these two groups, a continuous northward movement of the aborigines from the Little Andaman was in vogue and one such party had arrived in the Great Andamans who have been lately known as the Jarawas, who were all along subjected to pressure of the local natives belonging to the Great Andaman Group, the *Aka bea* of South Andaman. The very development of the hostility of the Jarawas and their complete seclusion from the other aboriginal groups owe to their being continuously subjected to the adversities. B. V. Eickstedt[1] has been of the opinion that the aborigines of the Andamans entered into the Great Andamans in two groups—the earlier group comprises the Onge, Jarawas and the Sentinelese while to the later group belong the ancestors of the Great Andaman Group. The passage of the Great Andaman Group has led to a constant southward push of the earlier group which has ultimately led to their habitation in the islands of the south i.e., the Little Andaman, Rutland Island and a part of the South Andaman. Cipriani has been emphatic enough in justifying the views of Brown that the Jarawas reached the Great Andamans from the south. Though they are supposed to have come from the Great Andamans by canoes, the art of constructing canoes and of using them have been completely forgotten and Cipriani believes that such instances of the loss of knowledge of the construction of canoes and their uses are many. A list of the names of the camps, given by Cipriani in the 1951 census, dating back to antiquity and having a good supply of drinking water and of

101 174 182 501

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1 Eickstedt, B. V — Die Negrito der Andaman (Anthro Ans).

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onge.

621 622 [592] rather than order is given by the leader. Cipriani observes.[1] "For instance, it is very amusing for them to think that a man gives orders to others. This means that they have no real chiefs. A so-called Onge chief, or raja, is only the head of a group of families living in the same communal hut, and giving not orders but only advice. It is the most experienced man who is considered chief in the hut, but his authority if at all never goes beyond that hut. In other words no real chief exists in the Little Andaman. Notwithstanding this, there is a perfect order in the island, because nobody interferes with the work or encroches upon what can be considered the rights of others."

124 162 As is common to most of the aborigines, the Onges are generally not very receptive when the questions about their numbers and other groups are enquired. The headman says that there are many many fifty Onges. However the number of the Onges are approximately 600.

22 231 241 [262] As regards the mode of living of the Onges, the hunting and collecting are the basis of their economy. The domestication of the plants i.e. art of agriculture is not known to them and it is only 30 years back, the dogs arrived in the island and have been domesticated by the Onges for chasing the pigs, their main prey. In the absence of agriculture, the natural products of the sea and the forest provide them with all their items of diet. Animal and vegetable products and honey are the main items of their diet and there has been, so far, no introduction of salt in their diet. The most important victims of their hunting are pigs and turtles, the former is chased by dogs and are killed with great 252 cruelty. The cooking of the fish, meat, roots, tubers, jackfruits etc are 251 done by putting them under fire. Preservation of foodstuffs is not widely practised except the jackfruit seeds which are tied up in a small net inside water on the bank of some stream and taken out during rainy season, when the other vegetable foodstuffs are not available. On 146 the whole, the Onges have a very balanced diet with a fair richness of all the nutrients. In this connection the observations of Dr. Cipriani during his survey in the Little Andaman throws considerable light in [157] their conditions of life. He has estimated the Onges as one of the happiest people of the world, who in spite of their primitive economy, are not the miserable victims of poor health, ill nutrition and oddities of life.

396 Some amount of artistry and craftsmanship have developed among these people. A canoe can be constructed by a man, all by himself from

[113] 1 Cipriani, L—Survey of Little Andaman during 1954; Bul. Dept. Anth.,

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
ONGE

the felling of the tree, chiselling the lumber and processing it further to give the shape of a canoe. Buckets of wood are also constructed by them from the softwood tree. Two types of baskets are made, the smaller ones are more well-finished than the bigger ones. The former is known as *tolcoaga* and the later *tole-laya*. Such activities have introduced the use of dahs, chisels, and iron files among the Onges, from the iron pieces derived from the sea shores. The other important pieces of their craftsmanship are the beautiful weavings of fibre, tussel of yellow fibre used by the women in their front. However, the art of making the earthen pots has been completely forgotten.

The leisure in their lives has helped the development of some amount of aesthetic senses among the Onges. All the Onges men and women shave their heads with flakes of glass, obtained from the sea-borne glass bottles. The body of the Onges are also painted with white clay which save their skin from insect-bite while red paint serves medicinal purposes if some individual is having fever. In times of mourning, red orchre paint is a taboo.[1]

Early marriage is the custom. The widows are looked down upon by the society. Some incidents of widow murder and drowning are heard. In the married life, the husband is devoted to his wife and both the husband and wife work for collecting their food.

Dances and songs are in vogue and there are practically songs for every occasion and activity. Most of their songs are more plaintive than joyous.

There are three broad divisions of the Onges of the Little Andaman :

(1) *Giremeka-Gobeule* group inhabiting the northeastern coast of the island ;

(2) *Engakwale group* live in the interior of the islands ; and

(3) *Gireraragobeule group* live in the southern and western coasts of the islands.

In spite of all the limitations, the Onges have been considered as one of the happiest people of the world with plenty of food and water to eat and drink and with very few social cankers to fight with. But as is common to all other aborigines of the Andamans, a decline in their number is discernible.

The Sentinelese

The Sentinelese are the least known of all the aborigines of the Anda-

1 The Onge of the Little Andaman—A short guide book ; Anthropological Gallery, Indian Museum, Calcutta.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Negritos

The Andamanese are almost non-existent and at present only 23 are surviving. Sri Shivdasani writes,[1] "I met only 20 of them in the camp at Long Island and was surprised to see that the youngest child there was about 9 years old, possibly a half breed". This goes a long way to prove the extremely poor fertility of the Andamanese. This has been further substantiated by Dr. Sarkar on analysis of the reproductive capacities of 100 aboriginal women of the Andamans from the original data collected by Portman.

Table No. 2

Reproductive lives of the Andamanese Women.

	North Andamanese	South Andamanese
No. of women	50	50
Less married	4	1
	46	49
Unproductive marriages	21	17
	25	32
Average children per mother	2.86	2.81
Average living children per mother	0.92	0.38
Sex-ratio	39m : 20f	52m : 38f
Net reproductive index	0.36	0.16

Source. Sarkar, S. S.—The origin and migration of the Negritoes in the Andaman Islands, Man in India, Vol. 33, No. 4, Oct-Dec, 1953.

As is evident from the above table, of the 100 women, 38 had unproductive marriages and 5 remained unmarried. The case of 43 women out of 100 can easily be set apart because of their unproductivity. This high percentage of unproductivity is really an alarming factor and the average number of children per mother is 2.83 but the average number of living children per mother is less. This ultimately results in a decline in the population number.

The Jarawa population, according to the 1951 census, is estimated in between 300 and 400. Further details about their demographic characteristics are not available.

1 Shivdasani, H. R. Report of the possibilities of colonisation and development of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, 1949.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
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114 The Onge population has been estimated by various authorities and the surveys of Dr. Cipriani have brought to light some important characteristics of the Onge population. Cipriani has ascertained the total Onge population to be 607, of which 229 are adult males, 241 are adult women and 137 children. Of the 137 children, he has detected 48 boys and 62 girls and about the rest he is not sure. However, the procedure followed by Cipriani and the conclusions derived by him, which are contrary to the previous knowledge, have been vehemently criticised by Dr. Sarkar.[1] Sarkar opines that the procedure of enumeration by counting the number of sleeping places in a communal hut is liable to gross errors because of the roving nature of the Onges of whom an appreciable number has no sleeping place. The determination of the sex-ratio from the communal huts are also more difficult. As a matter of fact the precision of enumeration, as is apparent from the census of Cipriani, cannot be attained and the deficiencies in the procedure of Cipriani have very well been brought to light by questioning and ultimate rejection by arguments. He writes that, 'His (Cipriani's) account is difficult to follow. There are very few relevant data regarding the actual Onge population. He has estimated the population instead of giving a simple population figure for each of the Onge settlements he visited. His estimates are based on the number of sleeping places in a hut, though nothing definite could be found either with regard to the total number of communal huts or the sleeping places. Then to find out the sex of the individuals from the sleeping places seems preposterous. Cipriani (1956) estimates the total Onge population to be 607, comprising 229 adult males, 241 adult women and 137 children. He was able to determine the sex of the children in about 80% of the cases, since immediately after the above quotation he states: 'Of the latter 48 are boys, 62 girls and of 27 sex could not be ascertained.' In the same paper and just two sentences before, where he gave the above figures, he mentioned a total of 497 individuals, comprising 242 men and 255 women. If the latter figures are meant only for adults then with the addition of 137 children to the above adult population of 497, the total Onge population appears to be 634. Even then the discrepancies in the adult population remain to be explained; it adds up to 470 (229 males, 241 females) once and to 497 (242 males, 255 females) another time.

Secondly, the enumeration of Cipriani shows a higher feminine population, whereas as analysed by Dr. Sarkar, all the previous estimates

1 Sarkar, S. S—Analecta et Additamenta, Anthropos 55, 1960.

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onge

of the Onges actually seen, show a predominance of males. The determination of sex-ratio by Cipriani is no doubt very much speculative in nature and as is evident from the extract of the comment of Dr. Sarkar, Cipriani himself has been contrary to his own versions, at times. All the previous censuses of the actual Onges met and counted show a predominance of males and this happens to be the logical argument of Dr. Sarkar to conclude that the Onges population has been characterised by high masculinity. High masculinity always imply a very high predominance of males over females but never in the previous censuses we find such a high predominance. The census of Cipriani shows a slightly higher number of females than males and the attainment of such a slight predominance of females over males is never a physical impossibility. As such we may believe that there may be a slight predominance of females over males though the procedure adopted by Cipriani is by no means a precise one.

Dr. Sarkar, though apparently justified, totally rejects the procedure of Cipriani. Census of population is in itself a very difficult job and it is always liable to errors even in the advanced countries. Therefore, the enumeration of Dr. Cipriani is highly praiseworthy and because of the difficulties of contacting all the Onges the enumeration of the communal huts and the number of sleeping beds are no doubt very important clues for an intelligent guess about their number.

Though Dr. Sarkar pleads for the predominance of males by taking into account the number of Onges actually seen and counted (which show a predominance of males), the research expeditions undertaken by Sri R. C. Nigam[1] under the auspices of the Anthropological Survey of India in March, 1955 and December, 1956 made him fairly well-acquainted with the island of Little Andaman. From his own actual counting, a higher number of females have been counted than males. He was able to contact 161 Onge individuals of which 138 belonged to the 45 family units and the rest were 'unattached'[2] individuals i.e., widows, unmarried

1 Nigam, R. C.—Little known tribes of the Andaman Islands—Their problems and prospect; Vanyajati; Vol. VIII, January, 1960, No. 1; Vol. VIII, April, 1960, No. 2 and Vol. VIII, July, 1960, No. 3.

2 A family is considered to be comprised of parents and children whereas, if the father or mother of a family is dead, the members have been called as 'unattached' type by R. C. Nigam.

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

166 [174] All the evidence points to this being far more than mere supposition and even today the Onges persist in their tendency to expand towards the north. In 1953 I could find no trace of a number of Onges whom I had known in 1952; the others told me they were all 'dead', but it seems probable that they had migrated to the islands further north. And in 1954 nearly all the canoes belonging to the communal huts in the south-west of Little Andaman, which I had seen in 1953, had vanished and were said to have gone with the 'dead'. It is probable that they too had migrated to Great Andaman, becoming 'Jarawas'.

166 484 [485] [501] This is physically quite possible. Between Little Andaman and Great Andaman the Onges have a line of transit camps, still in use, where food and water are easily available. All have a name, and I followed the line myself. With the help of their fragile but very fast canoes, and without carrying food or water (which they know will be available at the next transit camp), they can travel very quickly. [372] They take fire with them in the canoes in the form of a burning torch and while they are at sea, unlike the lazy pace of their normal attitude to life, they seem possessed by the desire to reach the next stopping point on terra firma.

174 166 Moreover, one may deduce from the fact that the names of these transit camps are all in the Onge language that the migrations have always been from south to north. Little Andaman, formed as it is mainly of coral banks and only projecting a short way above the sea, disappears from view in the tropical mists a few kilometres from the shore; from Rutland it is invisible, and as the Andamanese only travel by sea with land in sight or when its existence and direction is well known, no one from the north would have dared to travel south into the unknown.

[175] [501] [178] [184] We have already seen that the ignorance of the present-day Jarawas as regards the sea is no bar to a hypothesis of their original arrival in Great Andaman by sea. Colebrook, a hundred and fifty years ago, actually saw them with canoes, and Gilbert Rogers[1] recorded seeing canoes on the coasts of North Sentinel very similar to those of the Onges today. The accumulation, therefore, of this evidence and the general similarity of culture throughout the archipelago all adds up to inescapable conclusions.

000 Even the unique dances enjoyed by the Onges are to be seen

[113] [1] *Andaman and Nicobar Gazetteer*, 2 January 1904.

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

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